(18) 1250 The Library of the Vatican, Rome, Italy.
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The Christian Church is the greatest organized power on the earth, and we are now standing in the home of its traditional representative. This is one of the eleven thousand rooms and halls of the Vatican in Rome, the official residence of the Pope. We look almost 220 feet toward the east down this stately hall between the frescoed piers under that ceiling alive with saints and angels and flying cherubs; and yet even this is not the largest room in the vast library. There is another just behind us, a fifth of a mile long!

The magnificence of this stately hall is appropriate to its service, for it is here that some of the most rare and valuable books in the whole world are being preserved. Those cabinets that stand on both sides of the open corridor guard behind their carved doors printed volumes and ancient manuscripts of which no duplicates exist. Glass cases, like that one just ahead of us at the left, give us opportunity for a brief glance at a Bible faithfully written out in Greek by a 4th century Father; a copy of Virgil, patiently traced by hand in some lonely monastery sixteen hundred years ago — one of the few survivals from that far off day which helped bridge the gulf of time and let us 20th century men and women know what men and women were thinking while Augustus Cæsar was lord of the earth.

The table beyond that glass case on the left is itself a work of art in bronze and onyx; the tall vase which it holds is a beautiful creation of Sèvres porcelain, used as a baptismal font for the Prince Imperial, heir of Napoleon III. It was afterwards sent here as a gift to Pius IX. The other vase is of alabaster, and was a present from the Khedive of Egypt. This room and all the adjoining rooms are filled with such mementoes of the famous and great.

See: —

Rome Through the Stereoscope, by D. J. Ellison, with special "keyed" maps. Pub. by Underwood & Underwood.

The Library of the Vatican, Rome, Italy.

Bibliothèque du Vatican, Rome, Italie.

Die vatikanische Bibliothek, Rom, Italien.

Biblioteca del Vaticano, Roma, Italia.

Vatikan bibliotheket, Rom, Italien.

Ватиканская библіотека, Римъ, Италія